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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson No. 2

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

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Lesson Two

THE SYMBOLISM OF NUMBERS

Number symbols represent truths immanent in all things and manifest in all phenomena. The science of number is the foundation of every other department of human knowledge. Resolve to master thoroughly its elements presented in this lesson. Thus will you prepare your mind to understand principles and laws which you will apply to bring yourself into harmony with the rhythms of the cosmic life. The same principles to which the science of number is a key will make you ruler of your personality and free you from restricting limitations in your environment.

Let no fancied inaptitude or dislike for mathematics deter you from entering seriously into this study. You need not be quick at figures. You require no natural bent for abstruse abstractions. Set to work, and you can master the main points in a short time. The practice will make you proficient in the various applications of these principles.

The numeral symbols, from 0 to 9, represent successive stages in every cycle of the Life-power's self-expression, whether on the grand scale of the cosmos, or on the smaller scale of personal unfoldment. The order in the numeral series reflects an order which prevails throughout creation.

It is therefore an ancient doctrine that the Master Builder has ordered all things by number, measure and weight. Everywhere the properties of number are manifest, whether in the whirling of electrons within an atom, or in the arrangement of parts in a living body. Thus a famous relativist is reported to have said: "Number is one of the few things in the universe which is not relative."

This lesson will attempt nothing like an exhaustive treatment of number symbolism. For the present, an outline of the basic meanings of the numeral signs will suffice. As you proceed with your studies you will gather a great deal more information about numbers and their significance.

Some of the attributions may not seem clear the first time you read them. A few may even strike you as being far-fetched or arbitrary. Do not let this disturb you. Keep your purpose in view. You are learning number symbols because they are the basis of the occult language used by initiates to transmit their knowledge from generation to generation.

Even if the symbols were purely arbitrary (which they are not), you must know their traditional interpretations in order to understand the esoteric language of the mysteries. No

satisfactory substitute for this language has been devised. By means of it, two initiates may carry on a long conversation even though neither knows a word of the other's native tongue. By means of a few lines and figures, an adept can express more meaning than he could pack into pages of words.

When you have memorized the basic ideas of this numeral system, you will begin to see the connections between them and others related to them. In this lesson, the key-ideas are underlined at the beginning of every paragraph of attributions. The other meanings follow. An important part of your mental training is to trace the links of association which join the key-words to the others in the same paragraph. Be sure you do this.

In Lesson 1 you learned that there is a connection between the numbers and the corresponding sentences of The Pattern on the Trestleboard. The key-words in the Pattern are capitalized, and there is a sense in which every key-word may be taken as the name of the corresponding number.

MEANINGS OF THE NUMERAL SIGNS

0. **No-Thing**; the undifferentiated Power preceding all manifestation; absence of quantity, quality, or mass; freedom from every limitation; changelessness; the unknown, immeasurable, unfathomable, infinite, eternal Source, the Rootless Root of all creation; the sacred ellipse representing the endless line of Eternity; the Cosmic Egg; Superconsciousness.

1. **Beginning**; first in the numeral series, because 0 stands for that which precedes manifestation and is therefore not included in any series; inception; initiative; the Primal Will; selection; unity; singleness; individuality; attention; one-pointedness; concentration; the definite or manifest, as contrasted with the indefinable Source; Self-consciousness.

2. **Duplication**; repetition; Wisdom and Science; opposition; polarity; antithesis; succession; sequence; continuation; diffusion; separation; radiation; secondariness; subordination; dependence; Subconsciousness.

3. **Multiplication**; increase; growth; augmentation; expansion; amplification; extension; productiveness; fecundity; generation; the response of subconscious mental activity to self-conscious impulse in the generation of mental images; hence, Understanding.

4. **Order**; system; regulation; management; supervision; control; authority; command; dominance; the classifying activity of self-consciousness (this is induced

by conscious response to subconscious mental imagery); the Cosmic Order, considered as the underlying substance manifested in every form; Reason.

5. **Mediation**; (an idea suggested by the fact that 5 is the middle term in the series of signs from 1 to 9); adaptation; intervention; adjustment; hence Justice; accommodation; reconciliation; result of the classifying activities symbolized by subconscious elaboration of these classifications and the formation of deductions therefrom. Projected into the field of self-conscious awareness, these deductions are what are termed **Intuitions.**

6. **Reciprocation**; interchange; correlation; response; coordination; cooperation; correspondence; harmony; concord; equilibration; symmetry; Beauty.

7. **Equilibrium**; (the result of equilibration; the concrete application of the laws of symmetry and reciprocation); mastery; poise; rest; conquest; peace; safety; security; art; Victory.

8. **Rhythm**; periodicity; alternation; vibration; pulsation; flux and reflux; involution and evolution; education; culture; the response of subconsciousness to everything symbolized by 7.

9. **Conclusion**; (literally, "closing together," which implies the union of elements which are separate until the conclusion is reached, and has special reference to meanings attached to 9 through the Tarot Key bearing this number); goal; end; completion; fulfillment; attainment; the final result of the process symbolized by the series of digits; perfection; adeptship; the mystical "three times three" of Freemasons and of other societies which preserve some vestiges of the ancient mysteries.

The meaning of a number consisting of two or more digits may be ascertained by combining the ideas indicated by each symbol, beginning always with the digit on the right-hand or units place. Thus the number 10 combines the ideas of 0 and 1, with 1 considered as being the agency expressing the power represented by 0. Furthermore, since 10 follows 9, it implies that 9 stands for a finality which refers to a single cycle of evolution only.

The completion of a cycle is always a return to the Eternal No-Thing, 0; but since 0 is essentially changeless in its inherent nature, the Eternal Source is eternally a self-manifesting power. Consequently, a new cycle begins as soon as the preceding cycle ends.

Thus the number 10 symbolizes the eternal creativeness of the Life-power; the incessant whirling forth of the Self-expression of the Primal Will; the ever-turning wheel of manifestation. (See the Tarot Key number 10.) This makes 10 the number of embodiment; of the Kingdom; of Law in action. 10 is also a combination of a characteristic feminine symbol, 0, with another which, the world over, is a sign of masculinity, 1.

Memorize the numbers and the key-words which are underlined. Set aside ten pages in your occult diary. Head each page with one of the numeral signs and its key-word. Then copy each paragraph on the meaning of the numeral symbols. **This is important.** To copy anything is to make it more surely yours than if you merely read it.

As the days pass, whenever you get an idea about the meaning of some number, make a note of it on the proper page of your book. If you come upon anything in your reading, copy it under its appropriate heading.

Do not consult other texts on numbers, or look up articles on the meanings of numbers, in order to fill the pages of your book. Make notes of ideas which come to you from your own inner consciousness, but copy only what seems important whenever you encounter it in the course of your ordinary reading and study. Just at present, do not go in quest of numerical information.

What you need will come to you. It will come without special effort. You will be astonished at the quantity of material bearing upon the significance of numbers which will seem to flow in your direction, as if by magic. By magic it will be, because your work sets going the hidden forces of subconsciousness as explained in Seven Steps. In time, this section on numbers will become one of the most valuable items in your personally constructed reference library of occult science.

Another good practice is to look up the exact dictionary definitions of the numbers from 0 to 9, and of every word in the ten paragraphs of explanations given in this lesson. This will make you realize that the occult science of number is part of the fundamental structure of human thought. You will gain a great deal of insight from this exercise.

During your study period, arrange your Tarot Keys thus:

			0			
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
8	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**
15	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**

Including the placing of the Fool, this is the same arrangement as on the tableau you received with Introduction to Tarot. Examine it carefully, paying particular attention to the numbers of the Keys. Try to connect them with the pictures. In the Keys from 10 to 21, try to work out the meanings of the numbers from what you have learned concerning the ten symbols.

Transcribe your findings and your conjectures into your notebook. Do this, no matter how trivial or vague your first attempts may seem. You must make a beginning. These first endeavors to formulate ideas for yourself are like seeds which will bear a harvest of good fruit later.

In the foregoing arrangement of the Tarot Keys, the zero card is placed above the others to indicate that No-number, to which it corresponds, is logically superior to, and precedes, the idea of **beginning** represented by 1. 0 is also separated from the other number symbols because it is not really in the sequence of manifested appearances.

Number, however far the series may be extended, comes always to a final member or term of that particular series beyond which there is the No-Thing. Between any two numbers in a series, moreover, nothing intervenes. Thus the zero Key of Tarot represents:

1. What precedes the series;
2. What follows it;
3. What may be thought of as occupying the place of mediator between any two consecutive numbers of the series.

To indicate this last idea, Eliphas Levi, when he published his intentionally incorrect attribution of the Tarot Keys to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, placed the zero Key between those numbered 20 and 21.

For your information, though you may not be able to use it now, the seven Keys in the top row refer to **powers** or **potentialities** of consciousness. Those in the middle row are symbols of **laws** or **agencies.** The Keys in the bottom row represent **conditions** or **effects.** Thus Key 1 is the power which works through the agency of Key 8 to modify the conditions or effects symbolized by Key 15.

In this tableau, again, ten pairs of Keys balance numerically through 11, the Key named Justice, a symbol of equilibrium. Notice that this Key occupies the central position in the tableau. The number 11 is one-half the sum of any two numbers which are placed diametrically opposite in the tableau. Any such pair of Keys always bears numbers whose sum is 22, such as 1 and 21, 9 and 13, 6 and 16, and so on. Key 11 is both the arithmetical and the geometrical center, or mean, between the two Keys in each of these ten pairs.

Next week you will begin to color your Keys. There are many fine types of coloring materials available in stores these days. The Prang box of watercolors, made by The American Crayon Company, is a satisfactory and inexpensive set consisting of sixteen colors. These include the twelve semitones from Red to Red-Violet, and four extra pans: White, Black, Brown and Turquoise Blue. In addition to these, you may provide yourself with a pan each of silver and gold. Prang also offers sets of colored pencils for those who prefer them. You can purchase your water colors or other coloring medium at any stationery store or art shop or you may purchase the Prang watercolors or pencils directly from B. O. T. A.

Color only one card at a time, and wait for the instructions in the lessons. Begin by reading the directions straight through. Before applying color to any Key try to visualize exactly how

it will look when it is finished. This is a practical exercise of great value. It tends to clarify and make definite your mental imagery. It also intensifies the suggestive power of the Keys. Be sure to do it before coloring any Key.

For the best watercolor results, you will need two watercolor brushes, a No. 3 and a No. 1. We recommend Devoe & Reynolds red sable, since they are satisfactory and comparatively inexpensive. A porcelain dish with at least six chambers will also be of help, though not absolutely necessary.

Flesh color should be a combination of red, yellow, brown, black and white. This is to be representative of all five races. Each person should proportion the mixture of these five colors according to his or her own desires.

Apply the colors in the order given for each Key. Long experience has enabled us to determine this order, because of the qualities of the various kinds of watercolor. For instance, the reason we recommend you to wait until last to apply the red is that it runs very easily. Consequently, if applied too soon, it may run into a color you are applying next to it, and so spoil your work.

To give a lifelike appearance to the cheeks of the human figures, use a diluted red solution. A diluted brown with a trace of orange over the eyes enhances the appearance, but we recommend that you do not try this unless you are sure you can do it skillfully.

Blond hair is yellow with a little brown added. You can tell how much brown to add by testing on white paper.

The Keys can be made more striking if you use white, but this is an opaque color and difficult to use without covering up the black lines.

Gold and silver may be used where indicated in the coloring directions This is not by any means necessary, and gold and silver are difficult to apply. Wherever gold is called for, you may use yellow, or yellow with a trace of orange added to make golden yellow. For silver, use white, or leave blank.

If your colors do not appear bright enough, it is because you have applied them too diluted. This can be remedied by going over them again until the desired shade is secured. **When this is necessary, be sure the first coat is thoroughly dry before you apply another.** Otherwise you will get a spotty, muddy appearance. If you try your colors before applying them, you will have little difficulty.

By following these directions carefully you should be well pleased with the results. Let us suggest again that you read the directions for **each** card carefully before applying any color. In this way you will avoid coloring portions which should be left blank for another color. Experience has taught us that this precaution is **very necessary.**

You will find that coloring your Tarot Keys will make them come to life for you. You will start to develop a response to the pictorial images from a **feeling** level, and this in turn will give you an extraordinarily increased ability to transmute old subconscious habit patterns into positive states of **being** and **doing**. Coloring your Tarot Keys will increase your ability to live vividly in the here and now. You will become aware of subtleties of color, miracles of form, and the increased awareness of the sense of touch will do much to develop your inner contact with the **Higher Self**.

All these intensified aspects of consciousness **must have their effect on environment!** No amount of affirmations as taught in elementary metaphysics will be effective if the inner responses to every day life experience remain unchanged. Color your Tarot Keys and work with them as instructed. The impact it will have on your subconsciousness will become discernible to you in ever greater measure.

Get your color supplies this week, so that you will be prepared to follow the coloring instructions in your next lesson.

EXTRA COPIES OF TAROT TABLEAU

The Tarot Tableau which you received with Lesson #l of Introduction to Tarot is adequate for all your needs. However, many of our members have asked us to supply them with the Tarot Keys in larger sizes. For further information as to how to obtain the larger sized Tarot Keys, please refer to our Catalog Sheet or write to B. O. T. A.

Major Tarot Keys (2 1/2" x 4 1/4")

Major Tarot Keys (4" x 7")